

TRAINING

During late 1972 the Office of Personnel became acutely aware of the need for some type of mechanism to keep abreast of the substance and the effectiveness of the approaches, philosophy and methods of personnel management applied by the various echelons of managers in the Agency. The Personnel Practices Survey was developed to fill this need.

The information gleaned through the Survey will be shared with other managers toward achieving improvements in the quality of personnel administration. Guidance, advice and assistance will be provided by the Office of Personnel where such a need is indicated.

When we complete the Survey we will present a comprehensive report of our findings to the DCI and other appropriate Agency officials. In the interim, we are sharing with you our preliminary findings on training and career counseling. These findings are the result of our recently completed pilot program which consisted of interviews with representatives of five components covering a wide range of personnel issues. The pilot program will be used as the basis for structuring the remainder of the Survey.

Survey Findings

Training is a significant activity in most of the five components surveyed. The manner in which it is handled varies, however, from component to component and Career Service to Career Service. Some make an effort to use training as a systematic part of career development--the employee is told or provided with a list of training he should have. Some leave training almost entirely to the initiative and desires of the

individual employee. Others view training as a sort of luxury or fringe benefit with which to reward deserving employees during slack periods.

There are significant differences among components in their overall attitudes toward training and development. Training is not always the subject of special attention by those selecting individuals for assignment and promotion or for career development in general. Too often there is no attempt to relate training to future assignments.

Most components have training policies and guidelines which they publish and disseminate to their careerists. The policy papers generally cover the different categories of training such as internal, external, management initiated and employee initiated. Minimum training standards, established by grade level and occupational categories, are included also.

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Two of the five components have Training Selection Panels as a means of developing a flexible tie between training and both component needs and personal career development. One panel identified training courses which should be part of career development in that component and makes specific recommendations for training according to occupational groups. *(done)* The other panel considers and recommends candidates only for that training which is competitive, i.e., senior schools and Mid-Career; non-competitive training is handled by the career boards. A third component handles training piecemeal on the basis of employee requests. *(done)* The other two components have career management boards which consider individual training needs at the same time that they conduct their evaluation and ranking exercises.

In general the survey has shown that training is still handled on an ad hoc basis in certain parts of the Agency. This approach is being used even though this period of decreasing resources makes it increasingly necessary

for the Agency to become a more efficient and responsive organization.

It should be noted here that the Personnel Approaches Study Group also found the components and Career Services lacking any systematic way of handling training. The importance the Study Group placed on training is evident in the fact that three of the sixteen personnel authorities and responsibilities which the Group recommended for the Deputy Directors, and which the Management Committee approved, concern training. I think this is a clear indication that the DCI and Management Committee expect considerable effort to be directed toward achieving more effective manpower utilization. One method of meeting this objective is through effective training programs. The onus can be on the individual to get the training he needs but a program apparatus should be constructed to provide him with information and the Agency with the greatest return for training dollars spent.

-- Have you established written criteria for evaluating training courses or making training selections?

-- Is each of your career counselors familiar with the types of training available to those he is counseling?

-- Does your Directorate have a training profile of its own which would mesh with OTR offerings so that the end result would be an integrated training outline serving the needs of your immediate office as well as the broader Agency needs in terms of employee development?

-- What are your employees' attitudes about training?

-- Do you ensure that personnel records, including the Official Personnel file, clearly indicate the degree to which an individual's participation in certain training courses strengthened him and im-

proved his qualifications for additional assignments, increased

responsibility, etc?

-- Does each element of training contribute to the success, efficiency, and profitability of your office?

These are some of the questions we hope you will focus on during this symposium and after you return to your offices.